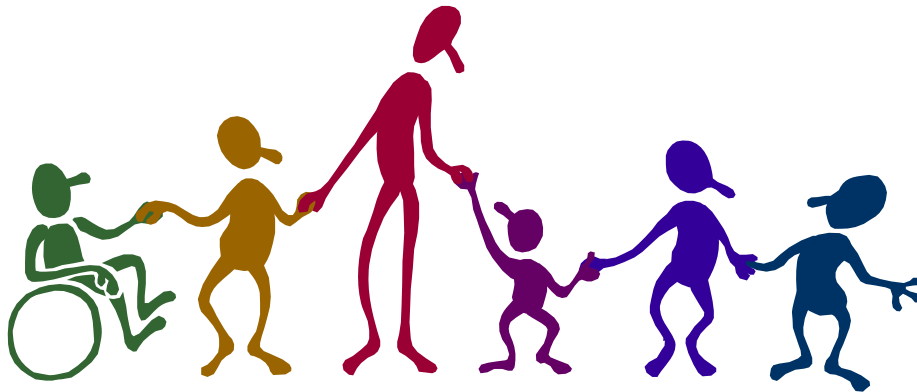


**South Dakota Department of Education
Advisory Panel for Children with Disabilities**

2004/2005 Annual Report



Meeting Dates

July 22, 2004 - Governor's Inn, Pierre, SD

October 13 & 14, 2004 - Black Hills State University, Spearfish,
SD

January 27, 2005 - DNN Video Teleconference, Multiple State
Sites

April 13, 2005 - Holiday Inn Express, Ft Pierre, SD

Chairperson of the Board

Ms. Barb Koenders - parent, Brookings

Duties include:

- ❖ Presiding at all meetings
- ❖ Planning and organizing meetings with the executive committee
- ❖ Preparing meeting agendas with the executive committee
- ❖ Assisting in preparing and submitting the annual report

Vice Chairperson

Ms. Karn Barth - administrator, Garretson

Duties include:

- ❖ Presiding at meetings when the chairperson is absent
- ❖ Planning and organizing meetings with the executive committee
- ❖ Preparing meeting agendas with the executive committee
- ❖ Assisting in preparing and submitting the annual report

Board Members

Todd Christensen- administrator, Kibben-Kuster, Rapid City

Michele Cogley- parent, Claremont

Greg Cooch- Assistant Professor, Special Ed, BHSU, Spearfish

Jim Dunston- administrator, State Treatment and Rehab, Custer

Gail Eichstadt- parent, Pierre

Bernie Grimme- Assistant Director, DRS, Pierre

Nicole Haneke- parent, Miller

Lisa Heckenlaible- special educator, Mitchell

Judy Hoscheid- Auxillary Placements Program, DSS, Pierre

Mark Krogstrand- person with a disability, Aberdeen

Bertina Larcher- parent, Custer

Amanda Laufenschlager- parent, Aberdeen

Connie McClintock- parent, Sioux Falls

Greg Riley- administrator, Black Hills Children's Home, Rapid City

Heather Stettinichs- parent, Brandon

Staff Members

Janet Ricketts - Director, Office of Educational Services and Support

Michelle Powers - Director, Special Education Programs

Angela Boddicker

Merle Doolittle

Linda Turner

Julie Carpenter

Peggy Mattke

Mary Weigandt

Panel Purpose

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires the establishment of a Special Education Advisory Panel to provide suggestions and advice to the State Department of Education on critical issues regarding special education services throughout South Dakota.

Panel Functions

- ❖ Advise the SEA of unmet needs within the State in the education of children with disabilities
- ❖ Comment publicly on any rules or regulations proposed by the state regarding the education of children with disabilities
- ❖ Advise the SEA in developing evaluations and reporting on data to the Secretary under section 618 of the Act
- ❖ Advise the SEA in developing corrective action plans to address findings identified in Federal monitoring reports under Part B of the Act
- ❖ Advise the SEA in developing and implementing policies relating to the coordination of services for children with disabilities
- ❖ Review and comment on final due process hearing findings and decisions

- ❖ Advise on eligible students with disabilities in adult prisons and on the education of eligible students with disabilities who have been convicted as adults and incarcerated in adult prisons

Panel Priorities

The panel divided into priority groups to operationalize the current priorities.

Priority 1

Member Participants: Bernie Grimme, Gail Eichstadt, and Jim Dunston

The group concluded that keeping current on new developments concerning the reauthorization of IDEA should still remain a priority.

The group also discussed the need for increased parental involvement by making parents aware of the Advisory Panel and its functions.

Outcome:

State regulations will reflect the Advisory Panel input.

Activities:

- ❖ Comparative analysis of House and Senate version of IDEA
- ❖ Comparative analysis of current and final IDEA
- ❖ Regular updates from interest groups and South Dakota Special Education Programs to Council members
- ❖ Developing a revised version of the Advisory Panel Annual Report to distribute

Indicators:

The Advisory Panel shall submit comments to the State Board of Education.

Results:

Panel members will increase their knowledge and understanding of the IDEA.

Priority 2

Member Participants:

Greg Cooch, Lisa Heckenlaible, Shirley Albright, Kevin Steele, Amanda Lautenschlager, and Judy Hoscheid

It was determined that Child Find should remain a priority. The group discussed the importance of ensuring all students are identified properly in the state. They also addressed the possible under-identification of students (students qualifying under the category of emotional disturbed as an example). Service provider problems were also a topic of discussion.

Implementation:

- ❖ Educating schools and parents on child find, especially emotional disturbance, through the ESA's
- ❖ Data driven decision making
 - Reviewing existing data
 - Comparing SD to other states
 - Monitoring baseline data for interventions
- ❖ Addressing behavioral intervention training
- ❖ Coordinating with mental health regarding best practices
- ❖ Early intervention data for emotional issues
 - Age when identified
- ❖ Relation with money and the need for emotional services

Outcome:

There will be consistent identification to ensure children in need of special education are recognized early and special education services are appropriately provided.

Activities:

- ❖ Increase public awareness to parents and professionals concerning early identification efforts
- ❖ Generate information through a variety of media regarding early identification screening
- ❖ Provide data to parents and professionals regarding identification and service provision to children with disabilities
- ❖ Review eligibility criteria for identifying children
- ❖ Coordinate with other state agency advisory panels to develop consistent methods of identification of children with disabilities
- ❖ Disseminate consistent criteria to all school districts

Indicators:

The number of children identified occurs earlier in age than present data shows.

Results:

- ❖ When using consistent methods of identification of children with disabilities, appropriate services are provided to meet the needs of the child.
- ❖ Early intervention takes place for children with disabilities.

Priority 3

Member Participants:

Greg King, Connie McClintock, Barb Koenders, Nicole Haneke, Heather Stettinichs, and Michele Cogley

The group determined that ensuring quality service providers are available in the state to provide special education and related services should remain a priority.

Outcome:

The number of qualified applicants for special education teaching and related services positions will increase and the knowledge base of current providers will broaden.

Activities:

- ❖ Randomly survey school districts on how they handle recruitment and retention of special education teachers
- ❖ Presentation to the Advisory Panel by Teacher Certification Director
- ❖ Presentation to the Advisory Panel by South Dakota Parent Connection
- ❖ Present to the panel the results and recommend appropriate needs for general education teachers to take more special education courses

Indicators:

The number of applicants for special education positions shall increase within the next three years. The number of current service providers who receive additional training in special education shall increase.

Results:

- ❖ The number of qualified applicants for special education jobs will increase.
- ❖ There will be a reduction in the turnover of special education teachers and service providers.
- ❖ General education teachers will have a broader knowledge of special education and/or children with disabilities.

- ❖ College curriculum for teacher training will be based on the rising needs of school districts, the public, and children with disabilities.

Critical Issues Addressed by the Panel

SD Teacher Certification System

Melody Schopp, Director, Office of Accreditation and Teacher Quality, provided an overview of the teacher certification system, testing updates, and changes to come. She also covered the status of teachers under NCLB defined as Highly Qualified, and noted the state HOUSE rules. New requirements for teacher testing were also discussed, including how teachers will be able to add endorsement areas in the future.

Special Education Endorsements

Melody Schopp requested that the panel provide comment on upcoming proposals for the endorsements of early childhood special education and K-12 special education, which is no longer available as an endorsement. Chairperson Koenders directed the Advisory Panel to convene a subgroup to provide recommendations for the entire panel to consider. This subcommittee consisted of panel members Greg Cooch, Jim Dunston, Gail Eichstadt, and Lisa Heckenliable.

The recommendation of the subcommittee was that the Praxis alone should not add a K-12 special education endorsement. The subcommittee felt that the endorsement should be obtained after five or more years teaching experience and upon completion of 23 hrs. coursework and a 3 hr. (to be determined) practicum.

Educational Services Agency System

This system has been funded since spring 2004. There are seven clustered Educational Service Agencies that will help to reach out to school districts across the state. Deb Barnett, Deputy Secretary, explained that, during the first year, the ESAs will be concentrating on school improvement efforts. The second prong of year one focuses on service and high quality professional development.

Project ENRICH

This project promotes the enrichment of teaching and learning environments for all children, from birth through age 21. This project provides professional development activities to teachers and early intervention providers. Increased achievement for children and youth with disabilities is the primary focus.

Annual Performance Report

The Annual Performance Report (APR) addresses these five areas:

Cluster Area 1- General Supervision

Cluster Area 2- Early Childhood Transitions

Cluster Area 3- Parent Involvement

Cluster Area 4- FAPE and LRE

Cluster Area 5- Secondary Transition

The APR was turned into the Federal Government on March 30, 2004. OSEP requested further information regarding the state's general supervision or compliance monitoring of school districts. The federal office also asked the state agency to explain the status of compliance for secondary transition and to address systemic issues being seen in the data. A response was sent to OSEP at the end of September, 2004.

Alternate Assessment

Michelle Powers, Director, Special Education Programs, discussed new federal flexibility regarding alternate assessment, alternate achievement standards, students who are limited English proficient, and some elements concerning highly qualified teachers under No Child Left Behind.

Michelle provided information on trainings being hosted in Rapid City, Watertown, Chamberlain and Sioux Falls on the newly revised Statewide Team-Led Alternate Assessment and Reporting System (STAARS).

Extended Standards

These standards were previously called functional standards. Michelle updated the panel members regarding the status of the extended standards recently adopted in the areas of reading and math. She explained that SEP has learned that the state extended standards should be more rigorous and more in-line with the state content standards. As a result, SEP will be holding a set of workgroup meetings with educators from around the state to align the extended standards to grade level standards. In addition, the groups will be developing the performance descriptors that are critical for the development of cut scores.

Navigator Proposal

Michelle Powers discussed a collaborative proposal that she and Lynn Boettcher-Fjellanger, Director of South Dakota Parent Connection have been developing. This proposal, called the Navigator Project, seeks to provide simple conflict resolution work at the local level. The project is designed around the seven ESA regions and it is anticipated that there will be at least one

"navigator" per region, and potentially two in higher population areas.

Department of Corrections

Jim Dunston, representing corrections, provided information and updates regarding the various facilities serving school-age populations incarcerated around the state and their status. He discussed the programs at the men's and women's prison and Springfield. He also discussed the percentages of individuals identified with disabilities being served. He provided the panel with a detailed overview of the programs at the Custer facilities, which includes the Brady Academy, Youth Challenge Center, Living Center, Quest, and Excel.

BHSU Teacher Training Programs

The panel viewed the lab school settings at an elementary school in Spearfish and heard from Dr. Dean Meyers, acting vice president at BHSU. Dr. Meyers provided a historical overview of the University's teacher training programs, illustrating the growth and philosophy of BHSU teacher programs. In addition to the curriculum revisions and focus, the University has partnered with a variety of communities, including Spearfish and Rapid City to provide innovative and exciting training programs for classroom teachers.

Monitoring

John Copenhaver, Director, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center discussed the current four count accountability process.

- ❖ Continuous Improvement Monitoring Program (CIMP)
- ❖ An OSEP verification visit
- ❖ Focused monitoring/intervention
- ❖ High Risk

IDEA Reauthorization

Michelle Powers shared some important dates with the panel.

- ❖ Dec 3, 2004- IDEA reauthorization was signed by President Bush
- ❖ July 1, 2005- All pieces of the law go into effect, except Highly Qualified, which is in effect now

She also explained that reauthorized IDEA contains three sections.

- ❖ Title I - contains bulk of changes
- ❖ Title II - creates a National Center for Special Education Research
- ❖ Title III - contains miscellaneous provisions, including effective dates

Michelle mentioned that there will be trainings offered in Sioux Falls, Watertown, Aberdeen, Rapid City, and Pierre to address the IDEA reauthorization. SEP staff will give an overview concerning the reauthorization changes.

1% Exemption Rule

Michelle Powers explained to the panel members that students in South Dakota with significant cognitive disabilities have the option of taking, as determined by their IEP teams, the STAARS alternate assessment in place of the Dakota STEP statewide assessment. Up to one percent of the advanced and/or proficient scores on the alternate assessment can be reported as proficient for the purposes of calculating adequate yearly progress.

Alternate assessments given that exceed this one percent at the district level will be considered not proficient unless a request for exemption from the One Percent Rule is applied for by each district. The information on requesting this waiver was mailed to

superintendents and Special Education Directors on October 25, 2004.

PLANS Committee

Julie Carpenter, Special Education Program Specialist, reported that the Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities has been awarded a five year grant to assist families and communities in supporting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. At least 50 targeted families will be served in rural northeastern SD in the first year and year two will expand these services to include one Native American Reservation in SD. Years three and four will include another Native American reservation and three additional rural areas in SD. In year five, the goal is statewide implementation.

The idea is to build on existing supports to provide services necessary for people to remain in their community. This project will provide those services by using a One-Stop Career Center to access services and a coordinator who will travel to the families to provide services and supports. The grant award is \$250,000 per year in federal dollars and an \$83,333 per year match in state dollars.

Complaints

Michelle Powers explained that SEP had 12 complaints last year and none so far this year. The most common complaint is that the IEP is not being followed.

Complaints are handled by the state agency. The State was prompted to begin working with Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center to help handle complaints.

Eligibility Guide

Julie Carpenter, SEP, explained that a group is being formed to rewrite the Eligibility Guide for Special Education. This group will consist of 30 - 40 people and will meet for the first time this summer. Response to Intervention and the Discrepancy Model will be two areas addressed by this group.

Upcoming Items for Discussion

Eligibility Guide

Proposed Federal Regulations

SD Administrative Rules